

**Town of Arlington
Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)**

Tuesday, September 28, 2004 7:15 PM

Committee members present: Elisabeth Carr-Jones, Ralph Elwell, Jeff Maxtutis, Lt. Jim McHugh, Mike Rademacher, Ron Santosuosso, Scott Smith, Ed Starr

Others present: Chuck Provancher, Carol Springs, John R. Leonard, Alan Jones, Laurel Ramseyer, Kjartan Stefansson, Roberto Scalese, Martha Scott, Maria Teager, Ann LeRoyer, Geoff Edgers, Bart Cunniff, Ed Trembly, Jack Hurd

1. The minutes of 8/24/2004 were approved unanimously.

Mike Rademacher arrived.

2. Downing Square

Elisabeth Carr-Jones introduced the issue, mentioning working group members Susan Harter, Jack Johnson, and Geoff Edgers. She briefly mentioned two options that are not being pursued at this point:

1. Roundabout. The available space is too small to handle trucks. Also, roundabouts generally do not have stop signs. As a result, residents were concerned about pedestrian safety.
2. Bumpouts on both sides of Park Avenue with a right turn lane from Lowell Street to Bow Street. This right turn lane presented some concerns for pedestrian safety.

She then presented the currently favored plan. It includes bumpouts, raised crosswalks and a provision for emergency vehicles to make the turn from Lowell Street to Bow Street. More specifically, it

- Reduces expanse of pavement on Bow Street side
- Provides an area for emergency turns from Lowell Street to Bow Street
- Raised crosswalks all around
- On the east side of Park Avenue, the curb is moved slightly to the east in order to widen the diagonal parking area
- Stop sign controls stay the same.

There are a number of outstanding issues:

- Add a 6th stop sign, facing Park Avenue northbound?
- Flashing red light to bring attention to the intersection?
- Raise the whole intersection, rather than the crosswalks alone?
- The tightened geometry will make right turns from Westminster to Lowell and from Lowell to Bow extremely difficult. Although traffic volume from Westminster to Lowell (1 in AM Peak hour, 3 in PM Peak hour) is extremely low, the traffic volume from Lowell to Bow is higher (16 in AM Peak hour, 18 in PM Peak hour).
- Is the traffic volume too high (11,000 ADT on Park Avenue) to use raised devices for traffic calming? Scott Smith noted that raised devices are used on Third Avenue in Cambridge, a street that also has a high traffic volume.

Residents had several comments:

- Effect of the raised crosswalks on road condition (motorists scraping them) and snowplows
- Possibility of someone losing control on a raised crosswalk and going off the road

- Ability for a truck to turn around in the intersection
- Piled snow blocking pedestrian access
- Intersection is gridlocked at 8 AM
- Should a left turn be prohibited from Lowell Street to Park Ave (but the intersection of Lowell St and Mass. Ave. has its own problems)?
- Illegal parking on the eastern half of Lowell Street
- People will want to make the right turn from Lowell to Bow.

It was suggested that a few other locations in the area would benefit from raised crosswalks

- On Lowell Street, across from the reservoir
- On Bow Street, by the bike path.

Ron Santosuoso suggested that a test be done first with sandbags. There was general agreement with this suggestion.

Ron Santosuoso noted that, regarding the proposal for a sidewalk on the east side of the Park Avenue bridge, that

- The State would have liability concerns with simply using a painted line
- It would cost some \$130,000 for a standalone structure.

Elisabeth Carr-Jones indicated that the next step is a working group meeting.

3. Symmes

Ed Starr reviewed the TAC presentation at Town Meeting, and events related to Symmes since the last TAC meeting.

Lt. Mc Hugh and Jack Hurd arrived towards the end of this discussion from the Snow and Ice meeting.

4. Jason / Norfolk

Ed Starr and Scott Smith discussed their field visits to the Jason/Norfolk site. Ed Starr presented a draft recommendation and photos of the site. They both expressed the opinion that, due to limited visibility, the crosswalk is not safe at its current location. Scott Smith presented three options:

1. Relocate the crosswalk to Woodland Road, along with the School Bus stop and all signage. In the interim, place a pedestrian warning device at Norfolk.
2. Relocate the crosswalk to Woodland Road, along with the School Bus stop and all signage. Given the narrowness of Jason Street and the absence of parking restrictions near Jason/Norfolk, do not place the pedestrian warning device at Jason and Norfolk.
3. Evaluate whether the number of pedestrians crossing (20 / hour, 15 if children or elderly) warrants a crosswalk at either location. If a crosswalk is warranted, relocate the crosswalk and School Bus stop to Woodland as in option 1. If a crosswalk is not warranted, remove the Jason/Norfolk crosswalk, but do not install a new crosswalk at Woodland.

After some discussion, option 2 was voted unanimously.

5. Cedar/ Waverly

Jeff Maxtutis reported that due to conflicting vacation schedules, he has not yet been able to meet with neighbors. Ron Santosuoso asked about the timing of any action, since winter is approaching. Jeff indicated he would meet with neighbors before the next meeting.

6. Rt. 60 / Mass. Ave

Jim McHugh reported. Although conduit exists for all 4 intersections (Mystic/Chestnut, Mass/Mystic/Pleasant, Mass/Medford, Mass/Franklin), the controllers are obsolete. A closed-loop system including controllers would cost about \$150,000.

7. DPW Department News

Ron Santosuoso reported that the signs for Hutchinson Road have arrived at DPW, and will be installed in the near future. He suggested that a good time to build the walking path would be in early winter, when there is a lull in other DPW activity.

The advance yield lines have been installed at the Town Hall crosswalk. Several committee members reported that they seem to be working as intended, with motorists stopping at the lines.

DPW has a contractor for the bumpouts on Quincy Street, and work on Russell Street / Court Street is slated to begin in Spring 2005. This includes a walkway along Court Street.

The work on Summer Street has started. It has been difficult due to ledge and drainage issues.

8. MIT / Lemelson

Mike Rademacher reported no recent activity.

9. Workload

Ed Starr offered to prepare and distribute a spreadsheet that lists our tasks and invited TAC members to comment on their importance and urgency. Alan Jones offered to post the project list on the TAC website. This would include project name and contact person.

10. Nominations

Ralph Elwell reminded members of the list of administrative responsibilities that was presented at the August meeting, and asked for volunteers. Ed Starr reported that the committee now has two openings: and Chamber of Commerce representative and an at-large position. He noted that David Walkinshaw had mentioned Chuck Pappas as a possible candidate. Jack Hurd offered to ensure that these openings are placed on the Board of Selectmen agenda.

11. Town Day

Ed Starr reported that for two years in a row we have received comments about the absence of a crosswalk at Mystic and Summer Street. Since this intersection is controlled by a signal, and there are no other crosswalks across Mystic Street nearby, we unanimously agreed that a crosswalk would be appropriate at this location. Lt. McHugh volunteered to check on whether the proper curb ramps and traffic signal hardware (walk buttons) were in place.

12. Other Department News

Jim McHugh reported that Mass Highway has been contacted about the signal heads at Summer Street / Park Ave Extension. He also noted that due to lack of personnel, the Police traffic unit was essentially

not functioning at this point.

Jack Hurd reported on his meeting with the Snow & Ice committee earlier that evening. With the changes in snow removal bylaws, and the desire to keep streets clear for emergency vehicles, there was general agreement that publicity of these changes before winter would be appropriate. Jack also noted that TAC might be asked for assistance on parking issues.

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 PM

Handouts:

Agenda package including agenda, list of projects and working groups, Town Day comments, status of actions to be done – from Ed Starr

Minutes from 8/24/2004 – from Scott Smith

Downing Square issues, traffic volumes, crash summary, locus map, and map of preferred alternative – from Elisabeth Carr-Jones

Slides from TAC's presentation at Town Meeting – from Ed Starr

Recommendation for crosswalk at Norfolk and Jason – from Ed Starr

Alternate recommendation for crosswalk at Norfolk and Jason – from Scott Smith